

Ideas for Using the Community Health Status Indicators (CHSI) Report in Your Community

The CHSI Report was produced to give local public health agencies another tool for improving their community's health. The suggestions below offer many ways to use the Report to augment local ideas and activities.



Celebrate Your Successes

In areas where a county's health status excels, celebrate the good news and spread the word. Let the community know about its good health where the indicators are positive.



Learn from One Another

By comparing a county with the "Peer Counties" with similar characteristics and the Nation, local public health agencies may be able to uncover reasons for rate differences. In areas where county rates are higher than others, share information about model programs that are making a difference. And think of other counties as good resources while working to improve the health of residents where a county's health status is lower. Most likely, Peer Counties are tackling similar challenges. Communities can learn from one another as they work to create innovative solutions for improving health.



Develop Healthy Community Partners

Use the CHSI Report to promote discussion with individuals and groups with an interest in making the county a healthier place to live. Get the word out through press releases, editorial boards, Web sites, community meetings, schools and parent/teacher organizations, libraries, and other places where people will become better educated about areas that need improvement. Involve them in identifying barriers to good health and coming up with solutions for improving health status where needed.

Involve Health Care Providers and Policy Makers

While a county's CHSI Report will probably not come as a surprise to those in the trenches of health care delivery, financing, and policy development, it may be an impetus for stepping back and reflecting on accomplishments and taking a hard look at areas that need improvement. Put the CHSI Report in the hands of board of health members, city council, county commissioners, State legislators, and business leaders. And make sure that health care professionals working in private practice, schools, clinics, hospitals, and public health receive the CHSI Report, along with their colleagues in social services, housing, food and nutrition, and other related programs. Improving health status takes a team effort and lots of muscle to compile data, and provide the ideas, funding, and delivery.

Take Another Look

The CHSI Report uses national-level data from several sources, many of which contain valuable county-level data. Examining these data may help identify areas where local or State data can fill critical gaps or where national data can be enhanced.

If the CHSI Report shows areas in a county that need improvement, this might offer the funding justification for additional surveillance to track health status indicators. Better data may be needed to target programs and policies.

Integrate Your CHSI Report Into Existing Health Planning and Assessment Activities

The CHSI Report is designed to fit into existing public health planning resources used by local public health agencies. Make the CHSI Report work by integrating it into an agency's planning activities and action steps. The CHSI Report can be used with other planning tools, such as Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnership (MAPP). For more information on how the CHSI data links with the new MAPP strategic approach for improving community health, visit the NACCHO Web site at www.naccho.org. The CHSI Report will be useful with other tools as well, such as the Planned Approach to Community Health (PATCH) and Healthy Communities.

Data on the Federal Healthy People 2010 targets for the Nation are also included in the CHSI Report. Use these targets to set goals for the community. Use the CHSI Report and other data to provide a baseline for marking your progress towards Healthy People 2010.

Let Us Know How the CHSI Report Works for You

We are interested in how the CHSI Report was/has been used. We also welcome suggestions on how the Report can be used or enhanced. Contact any of the members of the CHSI team listed on the back of the CHSI Report by mail, e-mail, fax, or phone, or go to the feedback page on this CHSI Web site.

